United Nations

Press Release

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General recommends that Security Council raise ceiling for Iraqi oil sales by $800 million -- to a total of $2.4 billion -- to meet needs for foodstuff and medical supplies.

- Secretary-General's Executive Delegate expresses concern over reports of serious clashes in northern Iraq between Government and non-government forces.

- Secretary-General attends meeting of global coalition for Africa.

- Secretary-General calls for stepped-up efforts to eradicate illiteracy.

- Secretary-General appeals for $400 million for Horn of Africa.

- Third Review Conference of Parties to Convention on Biological Weapons begins in Geneva.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar has recommended in a report to the Security Council, dated 4 September, that it raise the ceiling for Iraqi oil sales to a total of $2.4 billion -- $800 million more than the original amount authorized by the Council -- to enable Iraq to earn enough money for much-needed food and medical supplies.

The Council had authorized all States, by its resolution 706 (1991) of 15 August, to permit import of Iraqi oil products during a period of six months to produce a sum not to exceed $1.6 billion. The Council decided that Iraqi earnings should go into an escrow account to finance Iraq's humanitarian needs under tight United Nations control. Part of the sum should be used to pay compensation for war damages caused by the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait.

The Secretary-General said in his report that he had made his recommendation on the basis of estimates by his Executive Delegate, Sadruddin

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Aga Khan, who recently returned from a humanitarian inter-agency mission to Iraq. The mission found that the present food, health and nutrition situation in Iraq was "critical", and that the problems of the severely debilitated population were aggravated by widespread shortages of essential medicines and medical supplies.

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The Secretary-General's Executive Delegate, Sadruddin Aga Khan, has expressed concern over recent reports of serious clashes in northern Iraq between Government and non-Government forces. He said today in a statement issued in Geneva that the incidents were threatening to impede "any meaningful humanitarian endeavour".

The Executive Delegate appealed to all parties concerned to exercise maximum restraint so that the "essential humanitarian objectives can be realized in the interest of Iraq's entire population".

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The Secretary-General today participated in the second day of a meeting of the Global Coalition for Africa taking place in Paris. Edwige Avice, Minister for Cooperation and Development of France, is Chairman of the meeting, as representative of the host country. The meeting is organized jointly by the World Bank and the Botswana Government which is represented by President Ouett Ketumile Joni Masire who was the first speaker this morning.

Later today, the Secretary-General was scheduled to meet with the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of France, Roland Dumas, for an exchange of views on recent international developments.

The Secretary-General will leave tomorrow, 10 September, for Tehran.

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In a statement issued yesterday to mark the twenty-sixth anniversary of International Literacy Day, the Secretary-General stressed that considerable progress had been made since the appeal for the eradication of illiteracy launched by the World Conference of Ministers of Education gathered in Tehran in 1965. The literacy rate had increased and the number of adult illiterates had begun to drop world-wide. "There is today a new awareness of the importance of literacy in the development world", said the Secretary-General. However, he said, much remained to be done and only through sustained efforts and renewed commitment could these achievements be transmitted to all the peoples of the world.

The Secretary-General also paid special tribute to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for taking the lead in promoting literacy programmes as part of its campaign for education for all. He called on the international community to step up its efforts so that

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illiteracy could be significantly reduced by the end of the century.

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The Secretary-General has invited some 68 donor and affected countries to attend a pledging conference next Monday, 16 September, in connection with the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for the Special Emergency Programme for the Horn of Africa.

The appeal was announced today in Nairobi by Under-Secretary-General James Jonah, asking for $400 million to meet the emergency needs of an estimated 22.5 million people in five countries of the region, from 1 September to the end of this year.

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The States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bactoriological and Toxic Weapons and on their Destruction began today in Geneva their third review of the Convention.

First international agreement to provide for genuine disarmament, that is, the destruction of existing weapons, the Convention entered into force 16 years ago. The depository Governments are the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States. As of 31 August 1991, 115 States were parties to it.

In a message sent to the second Review Conference in 1986, Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar had stated that the Biological Weapons Convention constituted the first, and, so far, the only international legally binding instrument to prohibit and prevent the development, production and stockpiling of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction.

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